

A B S T R A C T

METHODS

5 A method for the detection of a target nucleic acid, which method comprises
contacting template nucleic acid from a sample with (i) a signalling system and (ii) a tailed
nucleic acid primer having a template binding region and the tail comprising a linker and a
target binding region, in the presence of appropriate nucleoside triphosphates and an agent for
polymerisation thereof, under conditions such that the template binding region of the primer
will hybridise to a complementary sequence in the template nucleic acid and be extended to
10 form a primer extension product, separating any such product from the template whereupon
the target binding region in the tail of the primer will hybridise to a sequence in the primer
extension product corresponding to the target nucleic acid, and wherein any such target
specific hybridisation causes a detectable change in the signalling system, such that the
presence or absence of the target nucleic acid in the sample is detected by reference to the
presence or absence of a detectable change in the signalling system.

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